

NEW STORY BY SHELDON, AUTHOR OF "IN HIS STEPS."

Will you be Christ's man or not?

The Temptations and Triumphs of EDWARD BLAKE: COLLEGE STUDENT.

By CHARLES M. SHELDON,
Author of "In His Steps."LONDON, ENGLAND: THE AUTHOR'S SYNDICATE.
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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTER.

Edward Blake, a farmer's son, goes to Hope College. He is called home by his father's death, but returns prepared to work his way through college. His sister Freda attends the same institution. Edward meets with William Preston, a gay, dissipated fellow, on whom Blake's influence is exerted. Blake is asked by a fellow student to handle a paper route the latter has bought and to proceed the route in his own way.

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CHAPTER II.

Temptation and Strength.

WILLIS came into the room, stopped abruptly and said: "What's the matter?"

"I'm trying to get Blake to take my paper route. He has scruples about renting it because he thinks he will have to."

"Have to lie about it?" added Blake as Rankin stopped.

"Oh, phaw!" replied Willis, as he turned toward the wall and took down his club. "Don't be so finicky. It's nothing but a technicality anyhow. If you've got a chance to rent from Rankin, go ahead. It's the best chance you'll have."

"I don't just like the idea of deceit in the matter," Edward finally said in a hesitating manner. "I can't get around the fact that I shall have to pretend that I own the route when I don't own it."

Rankin rose and walked over to the door. "Well, what do you say? Will you take the route or not?"

"I'll take it," replied Edward gravely. Rankin came back and sat down, while he went on to arrange the details a little more fully.

Finally he went out and Edward picked up a book and tried to study, but he was uneasy, and Willis noticed it.

"If I had a conscience as delicate as yours I'd want to trade off for a good time once in a while," he said as he hung up his club, pulled a book out of the shelf and sat down to his table, putting his feet on it and yawning sleepily.

"A bad time, you mean?" said Edward looking out of the window.

"That depends. It's lots of fun to do as you please."

Edward looked over at his roommate and wondered at his easy, happy expression.

"Your conscience never troubles you, does it?" he asked.

"It used to," replied Willis whistling a bar of a popular tune. "But I've trained it in the way it should go."

Next day Edward went down to the office and Rankin went with him to make arrangements.

The proprietor was very busy and did not question Edward at all, so that Rankin did all the talking himself.

A thing that Willis said, in talking it over with Edward afterward, Rankin increased the subscription list by the addition of twenty-five new names.

When Rankin paid him at the end of the week, according to their contract, he was much pleased.

He volunteered 50 cents extra on the account of his extra work, and as his custom had been since entering college, he went over to the girls' hall to see Freda.

When she came into the parlor she noticed Edward's unusually grave face.

He was habitually grave, but not so grave, and Freda was quick to see the difference.

"What have you been doing, Ned? You've been working too hard?"

"No, I haven't," Edward hesitated to tell her the real cause of his trouble, because he did not want her to know anything about the real struggle he was having to meet his expenses.

But Freda was a persistent girl and Edward's old habits of frankness finally prevailed, and he told his sister briefly about the newspaper route and his contract with Rankin.

Freda listened, and her face grew more and more distressed as he went on.

They were sitting in a corner of the parlor, for there were other callers present, and Freda said in a low voice:

"Ned, you never told me that uncle

matter of the paper route again.

His sister's evident distress for him had moved him very deeply.

At last he came down off the steps and started again toward his own room.

Rankin's room was on the front of the building and Edward as he looked up saw a light burning there.

He went on up and stopped at his own room.

He put his hand on the knob of the door and waited there a second.

Then he slowly walked across the hall and knocked at Rankin's door.

When Rankin opened the door and saw Edward he looked a little surprised, but invited him in politely enough and

"Who's doing any lying, I'd like to know," exclaimed Rankin savagely.

"I've done all the talking, and I'm willing to start the responsibility."

Edward walked to the door, saying as he opened it:

"I've made up my mind not to carry the papers another day. It's the only course I can take. Of course I will hand you the subscription lists as usual up to date, but I won't carry them."

"Won't you carry the route until I can find another renter? It's not an easy matter to transfer the route now that the term is so far along, and the fellows all have secured some regular work."

"I won't do it," said Edward firmly.

"You're a stubborn fellow," said Rankin, looking at him with a scornful expression.

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